A Busy Man's History of the Origin of Royal Arch Masonry

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FOREWORD

IN preparing this little booklet, I tried to keep in mind the needs of the busy man who wishes to know the essential facts of Masonic History, but cannot take the time to dig among the buried treasures of the past for the particular information he desires. I cannot assure him in advance that he will find just what he wants to know, but I believe he will find herein a brief statement of the essential facts in so far as they have been determined.

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THE Fellow Craft entering the Middle Chamber is informed that there are two kinds of Masonry, Operative and Speculative. Both kinds are defined, and he is told: "We work as Speculative Masons only, but our ancient brethren wrought in Operative as well as in Speculative Masonry."

Four Masonic Periods

In our study of Masonic history we must keep these two classes in mind, for many historians believe that our Speculative Masonry is a descendant from the old Operative Masonic Guilds. Therefore they divide Masonic History into four periods, viz., 1. Wholly Operative; 2. Mainly Operative but partly Speculative; 3. Partly Operative, but mainly Speculative, and 4. Wholly Speculative.

Each period merged into its successor so gradually that it is impossible to determine the time when one ended and the next one began, but we may roughly say that we find traces of Speculative Masonry in the Regius MS.

of approximately 1390 A. D. and of the Operative element in the lodges which formed the Grand Lodge at London in 1717.

The Royal Arch Degree belongs to the Speculative period, but in its study we must also consider the periods during which the Operative Craft was passing into the Speculative, for during these periods we may find traces of what is now the Royal Arch.

Operative Ritual

There is a general impression among Masons that the three degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason have always been worked in Masonic lodges, but the records we have indicate that such was not the case. On the evidence we now have I believe that the form of initiation among the ancient operatives was very simple. Practically all of what we would call "The Work" was given the new Mason at "the making" on his first admission into the Society. He took the obligation and was entered as an apprentice. The charges were then read to him and in due time as he acquired proficiency he was intrusted with the secrets of his trade. Possibly he was also given certain pass words, signs and tokens by means of which he could make himself known to another

Mason, or it may be these secrets were not given him till he completed his apprenticeship and he became a Fellow of the Craft or what was then the same thing, a Master Mason. We are told that there was "The Mason's Word" which was given to those who had earned it and many Masonic students think this was given him, at the end of his apprenticeship, so that he could prove himself to be a Master Mason wherever he traveled. The Master Mason's Degree, as such, did not then exist, though it may be that the main features of that degree were contained in the instructions given the Apprentice or Fellow Craft. The Master of that day was an overseer or superintendent, and he received no degree, as such, unless it be an installation ceremony, similar possibly to our Past Master's Degree.

The Legend of the Craft

At some time during his apprenticeship, the young Mason studied "The Legend of the Craft" which was a symbolic history of Masonry, full of errors if we call it "history" but full of meaning, if we consider it as allegory or symbolism. As a matter of fact it is a mixture of history and allegory. The characters are mainly historical, but their relations to each other and to their chronological order are allegorical.

It may be, as some think, that portions of this "Legend of the Craft" were occasionally presented in the form of dramatic plays, similar to our degrees. At any rate in studying this Legend as it appears in many of the Old Manuscripts we have, we find traces of our modern degrees, including the Royal Arch. It is true that this Legend, as we have it, is in narrative, not dramatic form, and the resemblance to the degrees we now have is very slight, but we find as many traces of the Royal Arch as we do of any of the Craft Degrees of the present time. For instance, there is the loss of certain valuable secrets which were afterwards recovered, because they had been deposited in a sacred place which was later discovered.

Amplification of the Old Manuscripts

We do not know when nor where the statements of the Old Charges were amplified into our present degrees. Mackey thought it was at and following the formation of the Grand Lodge at London in 1717, but probably as others think it began before that and continued after it.

I do not think that we will be far off if we suggest that the many learned men who had been "accepted" as Speculative Masons, brought with them much of the lore they had picked up in their study of the Ancient Mysteries and other cults both ancient and modern. They found the legends and symbolism of these cults very much like those of Operative Masonry but much more elaborate and dramatic. What is more natural than that they should put the two together? In both "The Legend of the Craft". and the Bible we find reference to Hiram Abif, but no reference to his death. However in many of the Ancient Mysteries we find legends similar to the Tragedy of the Third Degree. In the "'Legend of the Craft" we find references to lost and recovered secrets, but the legend of the "Lost Word" and its recovery is not there. It must be looked for and will be found in other ancient lore.

The Turning Point in 1717

The organization of the Grand Lodge at London in 1717 was a turning point in the history of Freemasonry. It has been termed the death of Operative and the birth of Speculative Masonry and there is much of truth in that statement, but we must not forget that Speculative Masonry existed before and Operative Masonry continued after 1717. It is true that Operative Masonry had been declining and Speculative Masonry increasing until the Speculatives first equaled and then outnumbered the Operatives. The rise of Puritanism, with its intense hatred for art and architecture, made it difficult for the Operatives to follow their trade and their influence rapidly declined. This was one of the causes which led to the formation of the first Grand Lodge, but for years afterwards the new Grand Lodge was nearly wrecked over disputes between the Operatives and Speculatives, the former being in the minority and unable to stem the rising power of the latter.

Early Dissensions in Grand Lodge

Until comparatively recent times, Masonic writers claimed that the dissension in the early years of the Grand Lodge was caused by changes made by them in the Ritual, especially in the Third Degree, until finally the dissenting brethren withdrew and formed a Grand Lodge of their own, calling themselves Ancients and derisively dubbing their rivals "Moderns", but Brother Henry Sadler in "Masonic Facts and Fictions" has proved that the so-called "Ancients" were not seceders, but Masons (principally Irish) in London who had never affiliated with the first Grand Lodge. The terms

"Moderns" and "Ancients" were used by James Anderson in his Constitutions of 1738 referring to an action of the Grand Lodge of England in 1735, so that the Ancients who did not form their Grand Lodge until 1751, were simply accepting terms first used by their rivals. Brother Sadler has shown that the reasons for the formation of the new Grand Lodge had nothing to do with changes which may have been made in the ritual by the "Moderns", though that reason was asserted years later when the rivalry between the two Grand Lodges had become intense. That changes had been made in the ritual is probably true, but both bodies were equally guilty and each one charged the other with having made unwarranted changes in the degrees. Therefore the charge, so often made, that the "Moderns" mutilated the Third Degree by removing and discarding the Royal Arch is unfounded, as is also the other charge that the "Ancients" invented the Royal Arch Degree to discredit their rivals.

We cannot, in this short article, discuss the pros and cons of all the theories which have been advanced to account for the origin of the Royal Arch Degree. We can give only that which seems to us most probable.

Growth of Masonic Degrees

When the first Grand Lodge was formed in 1717, the only Masonic Degrees we find mentioned in the accounts we have are those of Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft, though there are indications that the idea of a Master's Degree was forming. Mackey thinks that the Third Degree was instituted sometime between 1718 and 1723. Anderson in his Constitutions of 1723, p. 29, speaking of the forms and usages in early lodges, says: "Neither what was convey'd, nor the Manner how, can be communicated by writing; as no Man indeed can understand it without the Key of a Fellow-Craft." In other words, at that time, a Fellow-Craft was entitled to receive all Masonic secrets. Also the first Grand Master was a Fellow-Craft and Fellow-Crafts were eligible to hold any office in either Grand or Particular Lodge. This would probably not have been the case, had there been at that time a degree higher than that of Fellow-Craft. In the next edition of Anderson's Constitutions, published in 1738, the officers are required to be Master Masons.

The Master Mason's Degree

In all the regulations published in 1723 there is only one clause which might be construed to imply the existence of a Third Degree, viz., the first paragraph of Regulation XIII which reads:

> "At the said Quarterly Communication, all Matters that concern the Fraternity in general, or particular Lodges, or single Brethren, are quietly, sedately, and maturely to be discoursed and transacted: *Apprentices must be admitted Masters and Fellow-Craft only here, unless by a Dispensation.* Here also all Differences, that cannot be made up and accommodated privately, nor by a particular Lodge, are to be seriously considered and decided: And if any Brother thinks himself aggrieved by the Decision of this Board, he may appeal to the ANNUAL GRAND LODGE next ensuing, and leave his appeal in Writing, with the Grand Master, or his Deputy, or the Grand Wardens."

The clause which I have italicized is the only reference to a Master's Degree. It may be that the term "Masters" is here used in the Operative sense of "A master of his trade," because the Operative Mason had to prove his mastership of his trade before he could become a Fellow of the Craft. Or, as Mackey thinks, it may be that this clause was added as an afterthought because the Third Degree was then forming. If you will read the paragraph without this clause you will observe that it forms a complete and connected provision regarding the behavior of Brethren in Grand Lodge and the proper method of deciding differences between them. The clause about conferring degrees does not fit with either what precedes or follows, and looks like something inserted after the "Regulations" had been prepared.

Speculative Influence

Mention has been made of the growing influence of the Speculative element at the time of the organization of the Grand Lodge in 1717. It would seem that at about this time and possibly through the Speculative influence, the simple ceremonies of the Operatives were amplified and divided into degrees. First the Apprentice ceremony was divided into two degrees and the communication of the Mason's Word which formerly had been practically all the ceremony through which a Fellow-Craft passed, was made the center of an impressive ceremony. We do not know what this ceremony was, though some think it was something like our present Master's Degree. The impetus given to Speculative Masonry by the organization of the Grand Lodge of England caused still further amplification of the ceremonies until there were three degrees corresponding to the three grades of Operative Masonry.

This amplification was probably brought about then as it has been since by ambitious workers introducing new addresses and illustrations into the work. The amplification was done by individuals and lodges, not by official action of Grand Lodge, hence there were differences in the work of different lodges, and in different localities. That is probably why in some rituals of the period we find the real word in the Third Degree. In some of these old rituals the true word is on the Third Degree trestle board. In others the candidate is in "search of the word that was lost *and is now found*" (italics mine.) It is this fact as well as the accusation of the "Ancients" which led to the opinion that the "Moderns" had mutilated the Third Degree by cutting out the Royal Arch. This seems unlikely in view of the fact that the Royal Arch was popular in lodges before the Ancients organized, and it continued to be popular with both Moderns and Ancients, though not officially recognized by the former, until the union of the two in 1813 when it was officially recognized by the United Grand Lodge as a part of Ancient Craft Msonry.

New Material Introduced

The truth seems to be that in amplifying the "Legend of the Craft" into degrees there was much new material introduced by the Speculatives, in order to make the work more dramatic and impress its lessons more forcibly. There was a desire to keep the number of degrees down to three in order to conform to the three grades of Operative Masonry. Hence much valuable material in the Legend was omitted in the work. This omitted material with additions from philosophical mysticism was arranged into what we now call side degrees, and was worked by lodges as additional Masonic instruction. This additional work took different forms and different names in different lodges. Sometimes it was part of the regular work, but more often not. This, I think, explains why some old rituals seem to have the true word and others only the substitute. Gradually more and more of a ceremony grew around the idea of the recovered word until it became a separate degree but worked under a lodge charter as a part of true Masonry.

Where it became known as the Arch to the Masonic system we do not know. Anderson, in the Frontispiece to his Constitutions of 1723, shows an arch with its keystone among other Masonic symbols, and in the book itself he likens Masonry to "a well built Arch."

Earliest Printed Reference

The earliest known printed reference to Royal Arch Masonry is in Faulkner's

Dublin Journal of January 10-14, 1743, published at Dublin, Ireland. In this issue of the Journal is an account of a St. John's Day celebration of the "Lodge in Youghall, No. 21." From the account it would appear that the Lodge celebrated the event on an elaborate scale.

In the description of the parade there is mention of "the Royal Arch carried by two excellent Masons."

Brother W. J. Chetwode Crawley thinks this refers to the Royal Arch Degree and that the "excellent Masons" discharged the duties of Past Masters. At any rate the appearance of "the Royal Arch" in a *Lodge* ceremony indicates a connection between Symbolic Masonry and the Royal Arch.

Second Printed Reference

The next printed reference we have is in a book by Fifield Dassigny, entitled "A Serious and Impartial Enquiry into the Cause of the present decay of Freemasonry in the Kingdom of Ireland." This book was published at Dublin in 1744, and contains some references to Royal Arch Masons. For instance, on page 16 the writer says:

> I am informed in that city [York] is held an assembly of Master Masons under the title of Royal Arch Masons, who as their qualifications and excellencies are superior to others they receive a larger pay than work-

ing Masons; but of this more hereafter.

Again on page 32 of the same work he says:

> Now as the land marks of the constitution of Free-Masonry are universally the same throughout all kingdoms, and are so well fixt that they will not admit of removal, how comes it to pass that some have been led away with ridiculous innovations, an example, of which, I shall prove by a certain propagator of a false system some few years ago in this city, who imposed upon several very worthy men under a pretense of being Master of *the Royal Arch*, which he asserted he had brought with him from the city of York; and that the beauties of the Craft did principally consist in the knowledge of this valuable piece of Masonry. However he carried on his scheme for several months, and many of the learned and wise were his followers, till at length his fallacious art was discovered by a Brother of probity and wisdom, who had some small space before attained that excellent part of Masonry in London and plainly proved that his doctrine was false; whereupon the Brethren justly despised him and ordered him to be excluded from all benefits of the Craft, and altho' some of the fraternity have expressed an uneasiness at this matter being kept a secret from them (since they had already passed thro' the usual degrees of probation) I cannot help being of opinion that they have no right to any such benefit until they

make proper application, and are received with due formality, and as it is an organis'd body of men who have passed the chair, and given undeniable proofs of their skill in architecture, it cannot be treated with too much reverence, and more especially since the characters of the present members of that particular Lodge are untainted, and their behaviour judicious and unexceptionable; so that there cannot be the least hinge to hang a doubt on, but that they are most excellent Masons.

I cannot help informing the Brethren that there is lately arrived in this city a certain itinerant Mason, whose judgment (as he declares) is so far illumin'd, and whose optics are so strong that they can bear the view of the most lucid rays of the sun at noon day, and altho' we have contented ourselves with three material steps to approach our Summum Bonum, the immortal GOD, yet he presumes to acquaint us that he can add three more, which when properly plac'd may advance us to the highest heavens.

Summary of Quotations

Summarizing these quotations note that:

1. The author is informed that there are Master Masons at York called "Royal Arch Masons."

2. An imposter appeared in Dublin a few years before 1744, who claimed to be a Master of the Royal Arch which he had obtained in York.

3. This claimant was proved to be an imposter by a Brother who had received the Royal Arch Degree in London a short time ago.

4. Some of the Fraternity, who had taken the usual degrees, were displeased at being deprived of Masonic secrets.

5. Their objection was overruled because these secrets were given only to men who had "passed the chair" and were "excellent Masons," who had given undeniable proof of their skill in architecture.

6. An "itinerant Mason" had lately come to Dublin trying to add three degrees to the usual three.

7. The writer claims that the Third Degree itself leads to the "Summum Bonum the immortal GOD" and no more are needed.

Analysis of References

These references indicate that at that time Royal Arch Masonry was known and that it had a connection with Symbolic Masonry. Possibly the last paragraph indicates that the multiplication of degrees had now begun. The writer maintains that there are but three material steps to "our Summum Bonum, the immortal GOD." That is, only three Degrees are needed to obtain the True Word. The fact that all the letters of the word "GOD" are capitals indicates that it is a substitute for the "True Name of God," since that was the method used at that time to designate that the word GOD or LORD, was a substitute for the True Name. (For illustrations consult the King James version of the Bible.)

Note that this was in 1744 after the formation of the Grand Lodge of "Moderns" and before that of the "Ancients." Dermot, who was later accused by the "Moderns" of having invented the Royal Arch Degree did not receive that degree until 1746 and could not have invented it.

Foreign Influence

Dassigny in reference to the "Itinerant Mason" he mentions, infers that he was an Italian, and while he admits that the Italians are excellent Masons and he professes great esteem for "any one who shall add to the beauty of our glorious art, or by any means improve or enhance the value thereof," he hopes "no innocent and worthy brother may at any time be misled by false insinuations or *foreign schemes*." (Italics mine.)

This seems to imply that the idea of adding to the number of the three degrees, came from abroad, and in fact it was upon the Continent of Europe that that idea ran wild, but even in

Great Britain Masons desired and accepted additional degrees.

A Gradual Development

While the ideas expressed in the Royal Arch Degree were found in the "Legend of the Craft" before there was any Grand Lodge in the sense that we use the term, the formation of a separate degree came after 1717 and was a gradual development. It took several forms and the claim that it originated in France finds support in the fact that the French form more nearly resembles that in the "Legend of the Craft" than does either the English or the Irish.

Conflicting Ideas

In the symbolical science of Masonry, the three grades correspond with three sets of conflicting ideas: darkness, light; ignorance, knowledge; loss, recovery. The Entered Apprentice is brought from Darkness to Light, the Fellow Craft from Ignorance to Knowledge, and the Master Mason from a sense of Loss to one of Recovery. Hence the Royal Arch, though worked as a separate degree is an integral part of the requirements for Mastership. Therefore, at the union of the two Grand Lodges of England in 1813 it was "declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Masonry consisted of three degrees and no more, viz., those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Royal Arch."

First Record in America

The opinion that even at the early date of 1744 the degree was widely known is supported by the fact that the references to it are found in America as well as Europe, and in fact the first record of the ceremony of conferring the degree is in this country, not Europe. This record is in the early minutes of Fredericksburg Lodge, of Virginia, the lodge in which George Washington received his Masonic degrees. The Minutes of this lodge state that on December 22, 1753, three brethren were raised to the degree of Royal Arch Masons.

Lack of Authority

Thus, even when the Royal Arch became a separate degree, it was worked in a lodge, under the authority of a lodge charter. However, the lodge charter made no mention of the Royal Arch Degree and the Modern Grand Lodge of England took no notice of it. Thus it was no more than a side degree and as many abuses grew up around it, it did not prosper. This led to a demand for some governing body to regulate it. As Thomas Smith Webb, in the second edition of his Monitor published in 1802 said:

> Until the year 1797, no grand chapter of royal arch masons was organized in America. Previous to this period, a competent number of companions of that degree, possessed of sufficient abilities, under the sanction of a master's warrant, proceeded to exercise the rights and privileges of royal arch chapters, whenever they thought it expedient and proper; although in most cases the approbation of a neighbouring chapter was deemed useful, if not essential.
>
> This uncontrouled mode of proceeding, was subject to many inconveniences; unsuitable characters might be admitted; irregularities in the mode of working introduced; the purposes of the society perverted; and thus the order degraded, by falling into the hands of those who might be regardless of the reputation of the institution. If differences should arise between two chapters, who was to decide upon them? If unworthy characters, who for want of due caution had gained admission should attempt to open new chapters, for their own emolument, or for the purposes of conviviality or intemperance, who was to restrain them? If the established regulations, and ancient landmarks should be violated or broken down, where was there power sufficient to remedy the evil?
>
> Sensible of the existence of these, and many other inconveniences to which the order were subjected, the chapters of royal arch masons, in

various parts of the United States, have, within a few years past, taken the proper and necessary measures for forming and establishing grand royal arch chapters, for their better government and regulation.

Pennsylvania

This confusion did not prevail in Pennsylvania, since the Grand Lodge in that colony recognized the Royal Arch Degree and permitted Chapters of Royal Arch Masons to be opened under the Lodge Charters. The first Royal Arch Chapter in America was possibly that held in Philadelphia in 1758 or prior, under the Charter of Lodge No. 3. In 1795 the Chapters in Lodges Nos. 19, 52, and 67, of Philadelphia, attempted to form a Grand Royal Arch Chapter, but the Grand Lodge claimed exclusive jurisdiction over Royal Arch Masonry in Pennsylvania and the attempt failed. However, the desire for a Grand Chapter was so strong, that on November 23, 1795, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania established a Grand Royal Arch Chapter "under the immediate sanction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania."

It has been claimed that this "was the first Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons established in America," and in truth it was the first Body to take the name of "Grand Chapter," but it was not such in the sense that we now use the term, for it was a Grand Chapter in name only. It was not an independent body, but a subordinate of the Grand Lodge. All officers of the Grand Lodge, past and present, having obtained the Royal Arch Degree, were members of the Grand Chapter, and the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge was the "High Priest" of the Grand Chapter.

The independent Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania was not organized until 1824.

Maryland

Edwart T. Schultz claims that the first "Independent Grand Chapter" organized in the United States was the one formed in Maryland in the year 1797, but we know very little about this Grand Chapter and Companion Schultz says it became dormant about the year 1803. At any rate a new Grand Chapter for Maryland and the District of Columbia was organized January 21, 1807, and in the circular of October 24, 1806, calling a convention of Chapters to *organize a Grand Chapter*, reference is made to the fact that the Grand Chapter to which they had been tributary had for a long time lain dormant and that "our Chapters are held under the sanction of Lodges."

General Grand Chapter

The history of Royal Arch Masonry as a separate body in the United States of America begins with the movement which led to the organization of the General Grand Chapter.

On October 24, 1797, a convention of committees from St. Andrew's Chapter, Boston, Temple Chapter, Albany, and Newbury Chapter, met in convention at Mason's Hall, Boston, Mass., and resolved to take steps necessary to forming a Grand Royal Arch Chapter for the states in the northeastern part of the United States. Thomas Smith Webb was chosen chairman of this convention. They therefore issued a circular letter to the chapters in these states asking them to send one or more delegates to represent their Chapter at a meeting to be held in the city of Hartford, Conn., on the fourth Wednesday of January, next ensuing.

Most of the chapters invited accepted the invitation, and on January 24, 1798, the delegates from the several chapters met at Hartford, Conn., and organized the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Northeastern States of America, consisting of the states of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont and New York. A constitution was adopted and officers elected, among them being

Ephriam Kirby, of Litchfield, Conn., as Grand High Priest, and Thos. Smith Webb, of Albany, N. Y., Grand Scribe.

Circular Summarized

The circular above referred to stated that:

1. Grand Lodges had been established wherever Masonry flourished for the purpose of establishing lodges and enacting laws for their government.

2. A Grand Lodge of Master Masons has no authority over chapters of Royal Arch Masons.

3. The chapters should therefore organize themselves into a Grand Chapter for the government of chapters and to prevent irregularities.

4. They were informed that the chapters in Philadelphia had recently organized a Grand Chapter for that vicinity, and in conformity with that example it was the duty of the chapters in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, and New York to form Grand Chapter for said states.

The authors of this Circular were evidently uninformed as to the situation in Pennsylvania. They take the position "that no Grand Lodge of Master Masons can claim or exercise authority over any Convention or Chapter of Royal Arch Masons," and they state that in conformity to the example of the several Chapters of Philadelphia the Chapters in the Northeastern States should also form a Grand Chapter. As a matter of fact the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania both claimed and exercised authority over the Chapters and the so-called Grand Chapter was established by that Grand Lodge instead of the several Chapters. Therefore in the United States the General Grand Chapter was the first permanent independent Grand Chapter formed by Chapters organizing themselves and not subordinate to any other body.

First Permanent Grand Chapter

I here wish to call attention to a similarity in the formation of the first Sovereign Grand Lodge and that of the first Sovereign Grand Chapter. The First Grand Lodge was formed by four London Lodges for the City of London only. In a few years it became the Grand Lodge of England.

The first Grand Chapter, like the first Grand Lodge, has grown far beyond the expectation of its founders. At first it was confined to the six states named above, but in those states it claimed and exercised supreme authority over Royal Arch Masonry. In each state there was to be a "Deputy Grand Royal Arch Chapter" to have immediate supervision of the Chapters in that state, but such Deputy Grand Chapters exercised no powers not expressly conferred upon them by the Grand Chapter itself, and the Constitution of the Grand Chapter even prescribed the amount a Deputy Grand Chapter might charge for granting a Charter for a new Chapter within its jurisdiction.

1798

The first meeting of the Grand Chapter after its organization was held on the third Wednesday of September, 1798, in the city of Middletown, Conn.

1799

The second meeting was held on the second Wednesday of January, 1799, at Providence, R. I. At this second meeting the Constitution was amended and the name changed to the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons for the Northern States of America.

At this second meeting also the name of the "Deputy Grand Chapters" was changed to "State Grand Chapters," but their powers continued to be limited to those granted them by the General Grand Chapter. It was provided that the State Grand Chapters should meet at least once in each year and that the General Grand Chapter should meet once in seven years instead of annually as had been the case before.

At this time the jurisdiction of the General Grand Chapter was confined to the six states whose Chapters had originally formed it and apparently there was no thought of extending the territory. In fact no Deputy Grand Chapter had been formed in the states of Vermont or New Hampshire and jurisdiction over these states was therefore temporarily given to New York and Massachusetts respectively.

1806

Seven years later, however, at the third meeting held at Middletown, Connecticut, in January, 1806, it was announced that a Grand Chapter had been formed in the State of Vermont with the approval of the Grand Chapter of New York. This action was approved by the General Grand Chapter and the Grand Chapter of Vermont admitted to the union "under the General Grand Royal Arch Constitution." At this meeting also, the General Grand King and General Grand Scribe had issued warrants for a Chapter at Beaufort, South Carolina and also for one at Savanna, Georgia. The action of these General Grand Officers was approved and the warrants of these two Chapters made permanent. A petition for a charter for a Chapter at Charleston, South Carolina, was refused because it was not accompanied by a recommendation from another Chapter.

These petitions for charters from Companions in other parts of the United States led to revision of the Constitution whereby the jurisdiction of the General Grand Body was extended and the name changed to the "General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons for the United States of America," the name which it still bears.

Its career has been a long and useful one, but we cannot enter upon a discussion of its history here. It is very fully covered by Companion Charles A. Conover in his History of the Royal Arch Degree, which we hope will before long be available to the Companions.